Berlin, Germany--
April 1945
--IS EDWARD R. MURROW, BROADCASTING LIVE FROM THE FALL OF BERLIN, AND THIS REPORTER, FOR ONE, WILL NEVER FORGET THE THINGS WE SAW IN THIS CITY OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS...
"...WHEN CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE INVADERS LED ALLIED TROOPS TO VICTORY OVER THE LAST NAZI REGIMENTS HOLDING THE CITY.

--THERE T'WATCH HIM FIGHT THE RED SKULL ON THAT ROOFTOP IN BERLIN.
SAW, CLEAR AS DAY, THAT NAZI COWARD JUMP TO HIS OWN DEATH WHEN HE REALIZED HE HAD NO WAY OUT.
EXIT
THESE KIDS TODAY, THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND. EVERYONE'S SPECIAL NOW, EVERYONE'S A MUTANT OR A SUPER HERO...
BUT BACK THEN, GUYS LIKE CAP, THEY WERE A RARE BREED...
...AND THEY WON THAT DAMN WAR FOR US.
PUM PUM PUGAN... HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE, WHEN...?
WAS IT THE WEDDING? WAS IT ACTUALLY THAT LONG AGO?
Washington DC-- January 1946
I HEAR THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE THAT YOU'RE THINKING OF GETTING MARRIED, CORPORAL ROGERS? IS THAT CORRECT?
YES SIR, MISTER PRESIDENT, ASSUMING THAT YOU HAVE NO OBJECTIONS, SIR.
NOT OBJECTIONS, CERTAINLY. THE WAR IS OVER, YOU SERVED YOUR COUNTRY FAR MORE THAN WE COULD HAVE ASKED. YOU DESERVE SOME HAPPINESS NOW.
THANK YOU, SIR. I JUST DID WHAT I COULD, LIKE ALL THE OTHER SOLDIERS.

IS THIS, OR IS THIS NOT, A PHOTOGRAPH FROM YOUR WEDDING, CAPTAIN?
Senate Hearings On Mutant Activity In The United States--1951
YES, IT IS, SENATOR MCCARTHY.
AND IS THAT OR IS THAT NOT, PRINCE NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER AS HE WAS KNOWN DURING THE WAR, STANDING NOT TWO FEET AWAY FROM YOUR BRIDE?
THAT'S NAMOR RIGHT NEXT TO PEGGY, YES.
AND YET YOU'RE REFUSING TO ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS...MUTANT.
WHILE CLEARLY YOU'VE MAINTAINED A FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM BEYOND YOUR MISSIONS TOGETHER DURING THE WAR.
I'M NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR WHY I'M BEING QUESTIONED ABOUT NAMOR AT ALL, SENATOR. MAYBE THAT'S THE PROBLEM?
YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER, CAPTAIN. WE'RE ASKING THE QUESTIONS HERE, NOT YOU.
NOW, UNLESS YOU'VE BEEN SLEEPING THROUGH THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS, YOU'LL HAVE SEEN THE REPORTS OF MUTANT ACTIVITY IN THIS COUNTRY...
ABC

1955--The Moon
ASTRO-5 HAS LANDED... WE HAVE LUNAR CONTACT.
YOU ARE GO FOR LUNAR WALK, COLONEL ROGERS...
RIGHT... OH BOY...
WELL...SAY SOMETHING, ROGERS. YOU WERE CAPTAIN AMERICA, RIGHT? GIMME SOMETHING NEWSWORTHY TO FILM HERE...
THIS IS ONE SMALL STEP FOR MAN... ONE GIANT LEAP FOR PEACE BETWEEN MAN AND MUTANT-KIND.
ROGERS
HOW'S THAT FOR NEWSWORTHY, WATTS?
ASTRONAUT STEVE ROGERS'S CONTROVERSIAL FIRST WORDS FROM THE MOON HAVE BEEN THE TALK OF THE NATION THESE PAST WEEKS...
BUT SOURCES AT NASA WERE QUICK TO POINT OUT THAT ROGERS WAS MERELY TRYING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IT WAS ONLY THROUGH THE COMBINED WORK OF HUMAN AND MUTANT SCIENTISTS THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS ABLE TO REACH THE MOON SO EARLY IN THE SPACE RACE.

AND OF COURSE, AS THE DECADES PASSED, BUCK'S WORDS STAYED WITH ME... AND THERE WAS A LOT OF TRUTH IN THEM.
THE MUTANT ISSUE *WASN'T* BLACK AND WHITE...IT WAS ABOUT POLITICS AND PREJUDICE AND FEAR...IT WAS ABOUT SHADES OF GRAY.
AND THERE WERE SHADES OF GRAY AMONG MUTANTKIND, TOO. THERE WERE HEROES AND LEAPERS, AND THERE WERE CRIMINALS AND DESPOTS...
WHY NOT, RIGHT? WHY SHOULD MUTANTS BE DIFFERENT THAN ANYONE ELSE?
AND WHILE I SPOKE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS FOR ALL PEOPLE, REGARDLESS OF RACE, CREED, COLOR, OR GENETICS...
I ALSO BORE WITNESS TO A CHANGING WORLD, AS THE MUTANT POPULATION EXPLOSION BECAME SOMETHING UNDENIABLE.
REGARDLESS OF HOW MANKIND FELT, IT WAS CLEAR WE WOULD SOON BE A MINORITY...
AND IN THIS PERIOD OF CHANGE, ONE MUTANT ROSE TO PROMINENCE...MAGNUS.

AFTER HIS DESTRUCTION OF THE SENTINEL PROGRAM IN THE EARLY 70S, THE RUSHING TIDE FINALLY OVERTOOK US.
MAGNUS WAS SUDDENLY SPOKEN OF AS A WORLD LEADER. HE WAS MEETING WITH THE UNITED NATIONS AND DISCUSSING IDEAS...
...AND MAYBE IT WAS THE STUBBORN OLD WARHORSE IN ME, BUT MAGNUS'S VISION OF THE FUTURE, HIS IDEAS FOR PEACE, THEY DIDN'T SIT WELL WITH ME. AND PERHAPS FOOLISHLY, I SAID SO...
--WE'RE WATCHING AS LEADERS ALL OVER THE WORLD ARE FALLING INTO LINE, FALLING ALL OVER THEMSELVES TO AGREE WITH MAGNUS...
YOU ALL KNOW THAT I BEAR NO ILL-WILL TOWARD MUTANTS...I JUDGE MAN AND MUTANT ALIKE BY THEIR DEEDS AND THEIR WORDS...
AND I TELL YOU RIGHT HERE AND NOW, THAT IN MAGNUS'S WORDS I HEAR ECHOES OF MEN I'VE FACED *BEFORE*, MEN LIKE MUSSOLINI AND STALIN...
...MEN LIKE *HITLER!*
I SUPPOSE I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN SURPRISED WHEN I WAS FORCED TO TAKE AN EARLY RETIREMENT FROM THE AIR FORCE SOON AFTER THAT SPEECH.
IT TURNED OUT THAT MAGNUS HAD ALREADY GOTTEN MUCH FARTHER INSIDE THE SYSTEM THAN ANYONE REALIZED, AND DISSENT WAS NOT GOING TO BE TOLERATED...

IT'S AMAZING HOW QUICKLY THE WORLD CAN PASS YOU BY, CAN MAKE YOU IRRELEVANT.
FROM THEN ON, THE ONLY PEOPLE INTERESTED IN TALKING TO ME WERE THE RADICAL HUMAN-SEPARATIST MOVEMENTS, AND I WANTED NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM.
IT WASN'T ABOUT KEEPING MUTANTS AND HUMANS APART, IT WAS ABOUT MAKING SURE THE PEOPLE IN CHARGE WEREN'T SELLING US OUT...BUT NO ONE WOULD LISTEN.
IN THE LATE 70S, WHEN BUCKY WAS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY, I WAS NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK AT HIS FUNERAL.
I WAS NEVER EVEN TOLD THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS DEATH, THOUGH READING BETWEEN THE LINES, IT SEEMED CLEAR IT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH A S.H.I.E.L.D. OP ON GENOSHA.
AND S.H.I.E.L.D. WOULD SOON BE YET ANOTHER ARM OF MAGNUS'S WORLD, WHICH I DOUBT BUCK WOULD'VE FOUND IRONIC.
MAYBE IT WAS ALREADY STARTING THEN...PEGGY WASN'T EVEN AT THE FUNERAL...

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

All right, the letters are pouring in in a steady stream at this point. Still not enough questions, as far as I'm concerned, but plenty of mail to choose from. So, if yours didn't get printed, don't take it personally, and keep trying. Just be more interesting next time (Kidding!) We re running late this month, what with the Scarlet Witch changing reality on us and turning us all into mutants, so no Question of the Month this time.

Dude, you guys never stop, do ya! After an outstanding first arc, you start the first part of Winter Soldier with a bang. Issue #8 was jam-packed with action, intense emotion, and astonishing art. First you give us an appearance by the MODOC squad, which are One of the Many Adversaries of Cap (wink wink), then you give us one heck of a cliffhanger. You can just smell CLASSIC with this one. Hope you guys continue making Cap such a BAD @$$!! Keep it up, you dirty little dawgs!

Jonty
(via e-mail)

What s with all the winking? You should really get that looked at.

I was prepared for another CAPTAIN AMERICA series that would fall and disappoint. Thus, I was completely surprised and enraptured by this great journey Brubaker, Epting, D'Armata and all involved have taken us on. Pleasantries aside, I have a couple pestering fan questions I wish to pose.

What can you going to do about Falcon? His recent appearances in pre-Disassembled AVENGERS and CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON have, in my eyes, reinvigorated the character and made him interesting again. He wasn't just another of Cap's goofy cronies (D-Man, Jack Flag, Vagabond, etc.) but he was an interesting, full-fledged character in his own right, much as he had been when he originally appeared. He was half of a partnership, not the junior member, or sidekick--he could mouth off to Cap, give Cap advice, and make Cap follow his plans, whereas usually Cap is the one in charge and no one questions it. At the end of Priest's American Psycho story in his CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON, Falcon has disappeared and Cap is standing in a graveyard in Paris looking rather glum. Flash forward to House of M, Falcon's been called upon by the New Avengers, and he shows up--no explanation for the ending of American Psycho --and back in his old duds.

I'd just like to know what happened in the interim and what happened to Sam's nifty photonic hard-light wings. Perhaps those are questions left to be discussed in the rumored, future Falcon solo series. I just wanted to know if you had planned to use him in your series.

Also, might we see some of the new Invaders? At the end of that series, Thin Man had escaped and was presumed dead--although Cap certainly knew better. He could certainly become a new, interesting thorn in Cap's side. The rest of the New Invaders were left intact, more or less, and operating out of Dymhurst in the U.K. Union Jack has already been utilized as a Captain America ally; what about U.S.Agent, Blazing Skull and the rest of the crew?

I don't want to turn this into a laundry list of characters and situations I'd like to see, but a certain Baron Zemo is also out there lurking around...At any rate, whatever you do, I can't wait for the next issue.

J. Kane
(via e-mail)

I will be using the Falcon fairly soon, actually, and it's certainly possible that some of the Invaders may show up here or there, as well, over the course of the series. But one thing I should point out, just as I wouldn't want someone else to have to finish my dangling plot threads in another book, I probably won t get too into in-depth explanations about storylines from other series. It s hard enough keeping up with my own plotlines, honestly, so I just try to make sure the readers know as much as they need to keep up.

That said, I love the Falcon, and if he didn't have a new series on the horizon, you'd probably see him more often in this one, get excited about his upcoming appearance. So, if you want more Falcon in this book, write to Marvel and tell them to cancel that new Falcon series Oh wait, on second thought, maybe not.

Was it my imagination, or did this issue take longer than usual to reach the stores? Not complaining, but it seemed like it did. Ah, but the wait was well worth it! The last page of CAPTAIN AMERICA #8 will go down as one of the best cliff-hangers in comic book history! Damn, this entire run up until now reads like a Clancy novel.

However, anybody that saw James Cameron's *Titanic* knows of the deaths of the ill-fated passengers via hypothermia and must accept that Bucky was already dead when he was recovered. That and the way Epting drew him, with that right hand hovering over the table, it is clear that he was already either frozen solid or experiencing rigor mortis.

Was it possible for the body to be so intact (besides missing the left arm) after the explosion? Well, depending on the type or amount of high yield material it was packed with--for argument's sake--let's say due to the drone plane's size, then taking into account weight for fuel for it to be able to fly the distance, it isn't hard to conclude that it wasn't loaded to the brim with explosives. Also it isn't hard to believe that he would be mostly intact since explosions do most damage in enclosed spaces.

Also we've known for years that Cap's super-soldier serum kept him alive during his deep freeze and Bucky is a regular human so, it's safe to conclude that Winter Soldier is either Bucky's body with another person's mind (ala Deathlok) or >gasp< some type of clone?

Can't wait to see what the true reason is and I'm sure it will be a surprise. By the way, congrats for getting a gig on DAREDEVIL, guess it's time to add another title to my 'pull list'.

R. Cruz
(via e-mail)

Your questions about the Winter Soldier will all be answered next issue, but you rn at least on the right track, to some degree.

And now that you bring it up, this is a perfect place to mention that Michael Lark and I will be taking over DAREDEVIL following Bendis and Maleev's groundbreaking run, so if you're a Cap fan, and you like what Michael has been doing over here (and how could you not?) then you ll have to pick up our debut issue in February. Right?

You know, I really don't think you're going to bring back Bucky, but I've been wrong before. I hope I'm not wrong, I hope you realize how important dead Bucky is to the Mythos of Captain America, but you might not. Personally, I think The "Winter Soldier" is probably just some illusion from the Cosmic Cube. Or maybe he could be the Bucky from an alternate universe, but that seems unlikely because it hasn't been set up. What I'm REALLY looking for (or "who," rather) is...duh duh DUH: Baron Zemo. I don't know which one, but hopefully the original. Now Zemo IS someone you can bring back from the dead without causing much of a stir. And that MODOC squad looks suspiciously like Zemo's androids from way back. Oh yeah, and the Skull can't really be dead, either. Nope, you're gonna have the Skull, and Zemo, and probably one other dude. Arnim Zola or the Hate-monger. That would be my guess.

You folks are doing a great job with this series. I didn't think I was going to like Cap working for the Man. Honestly, I prefer a Captain America who has more doubts about the righteousness of the U.S. government. But you're making it work! The stories are great and the art is fantastic. Any chance of Namor making an appearance soon?

Joe "the Uncredible" Duke
W. College Corner, IN

Oh, I understand how important Bucky s death was to bringing Cap into the modern Marvel Universe, and how big a part of the Mythos it is, believe me. I'm sure I've put more thought into Bucky than just about anyone out there, really. And this story, the Winter Soldier saga, is treading similar paths as many of Stan Lee's early Cap storylines did, examining Bucky and how he affects Cap. I guarantee you it's far from over, and no one has predicted how it's going to play out.

As for Zemo coming back, I don't know, it's not on the current agenda, nor are Arnim Zola or the Hate-Monger (though I love that name). And I've promised many fans that if the Skull ever DOES return, it won"t be in some clone of Steve Rogers that Arnim Zola has hiding out somewhere. No, that's too easy, and it s been done.

Namor? Probably at some point. I love Namor.

I have been a fan of Cap's since I saw him leaping out of the page on the cover of AVENGERS #4. I rarely ever write to comics unless I am extremely moved or ticked off. For the past few years I have let others speak for me on the letters pages. They usually do. But no one has this time. So it's up to me to defend the honor of old time Cap fans, and Stan and Jack.

Some things you don't mess with. They have brought back everybody else, but not Bucky. Even Gwen... on more than one occasion. I know irreverence is the current fad. But you have to have some respect for what has gone before. All the great writers that have entertained us, and me, for the last 40 years.

If you really are bringing back Bucky Barnes, let this tale end with Bucky remembering who he is...and embracing Cap at the end of it all with these two men shedding real tears. Let them be a team again. If this is Bucky. Do not have Cap have to kill Bucky to save Sharon, Nick, or anybody else. Please...But then, we all know this really isn't Bucky. Give you credit for the great story though. Almost surpasses Mark Wald's classic non-revival of Barry Allen a few years ago. Ouch, that one still hurts.

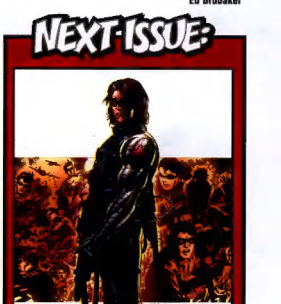
Carlos M. Fernandez Jr.
(via e-mail)

Hey, I am an old-time Cap fan, and a huge Stan and Jack fan. And I guarantee you we aren't cashing in on some fad here, we legitimately have what we think is a great story to tell, and one that I believe does show respect for what has gone before. At least, I've sure put a lot of work into trying to make sure it does.

But, you ll all just have to come back next month and judge for yourself, as the secrets of the Winter Soldier are finally revealed!

Ed Brubaker

NEXT ISSUE:



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